

Administrative Directive No. 4.17

Effective Date: July 1, 1987

Revision Date: _____

Subject: EMPLOYEE SUGGESTION PROGRAM

1. PURPOSE/DEFINITION

- a. To recognize and reward City employees who contribute workable and adopted suggestions for the improvement of City government.
- b. A "Suggestion": consists of a written idea proposed by an employee of the City of San Antonio with a clearly defined device or method to do a job systems or procedure, better, quicker, easier, safer or at less cost.

2. RESPONSIBILITY

- a. Appoint an Employee Suggestion Program Committee (E.S.P.C.) consisting of:
 - . a representative of the Personnel Department;
 - . a representative of the Budget & Research Department;
 - . the Assistant to the City Manager;
 - . the Strategic Management Facilitator; and
 - . a Department Head.
- b. The Committee shall rule on the applicability or implementation of all suggestions and awards. The decision of the committee shall be final.
- c. The chairman of the Committee will be the Assistant to the City Manager.
- d. Assign a Personnel Department representative to administer the program.

3. PROCEDURES

- a. All suggestions will be submitted directly to the Employee Suggestion Program Committee (E.S.P.C.) through the Personnel Department where the program administrator will date and time stamp the suggestion, make a preliminary determination concerning eligibility, and acknowledge receipt of the suggestion.
- b. The Committee will check the suggestion for clarity and route it to the appropriate Department Head for evaluation.

- c. The Department Head will review and evaluate the suggestion. Department Heads may assign an employee(s) to evaluate the suggestion. Estimated savings are the responsibility of the department and supporting documentation must be attached with the evaluation form. All recommendations for adoption or rejection must be signed by the Department Head and forwarded to the Committee.
- d. The Committee will review the department's findings/recommendations and conduct the final decision on the suggestion. If a suggestion is determined to have merit by the respective department, the Committee will vote on the applicability of an award.
- e. The suggester and the Department Head will be notified of the decision made by the Committee.

4. ELIGIBLE/INELIGIBLE SUGGESTION CRITERIA

a. Eligible suggestion criteria:

- . improving methods and procedures;
- . saving time, labor, material, supplies;
- . improving tools;
- . improving or eliminating unnecessary administrative and operational procedures, practices;
- . eliminating delays, duplication of work efforts.

b. Ineligible suggestion criteria:

- . personal grievances;
- . classification and pay;
- . ordinary requests for supplies and services;
- . matters already under study;
- . matters requiring state or federal legislative action;
- . matters within the scope of collective bargaining;
- . suggestions recommending the use or purchase of a specific brand or product.

5. EMPLOYEE ELIGIBILITY

- a. All employees are eligible to submit suggestions, either individually or as a group.
- b. The eligibility for a monetary award, however, will be based on job responsibility in relation to the subject of the idea. For example, executives, middle management, and any employee assigned to a position of conducting research and development, or assigned to a job requiring the solution of specific problems where the suggestion scope of such research would be ineligible for cash awards (i.e. Budget & Research Analyst, Police Planning and Research staff, Systems Analyst, etc.).

6. EVALUATOR/EVALUATION PROCESS

- a. The evaluator should be familiar with the process covered in the

suggestion and consider several factors in his/her evaluation, i.e. new and used equipment cost and specification; purchase cost; budget impact; staffing levels, service levels; work flow; paper flow; standards; volumes; control processes; employee skill levels; safety considerations and current or past management studies.

- b. The evaluation process will answer the following question concerning any suggestion:

- . Is the suggestion an improvement over what currently exists?
- . Can the suggestion be implemented?
- . What are the benefits?
- . If the suggestion is not an improvement or can't be implemented, why can't it?

7. DETERMINATION OF AWARDS

- a. Either monetary or nonmonetary awards may be given for suggestions that are adopted by the E.S.P.C.

- . Recognition awards for all suggestions,
- . Cash awards based on 10% of the first year's realized savings not to exceed \$1,000.
- . The City Manager can make special awards for the implementation of unusual suggestions which result in superior savings or service improvements.

- b. Awards will be split equally among eligible co-signers of a suggestion if more than one individual submits the suggestion.

- . If a department modifies an employee's suggestion and adopts it in a different form the employee shall be eligible for an award if the employee's suggestion was directly responsible for the action taken.
- . If duplicate suggestions are received by the committee, the one bearing the earlier date of receipt shall be the one considered eligible for the award.
- . Cash awards made to City employees for their suggestions are considered wages subject to income tax withholding. It is the policy of the City to absorb these tax payments and grant awards which are net amounts not requiring further tax payments by the employee.
- . Payments for adopted suggestions will be made even if the suggester is no longer eligible, so long as the suggestion was submitted prior to ineligibility. However, no awards will be made to anyone no longer in an active pay status.


8. PROCESS/AWARD TIME

- a. The processing time is defined as the time of receipt (when suggestion form is dated and time stamped) to the time of disposition (Committee's decision to reject or accept).

- b. If a longer period of time is required, the employee or group will be advised.
- c. The intent will be to process each suggestion within 90 days of receipt into the Suggestion Office.
- d. Award presentations will be made quarterly.

9. OWNERSHIP/CLAIM RIGHTS

- a. The suggester retains ownership of an idea during the period of its evaluation. Upon adoption, ownership rights belong to the City.
- b. If a suggestion results in patent rights, the City shall own these rights if a monetary award is given and accepted.
- c. Upon acceptance of cash or non-cash awards(s), the use of the adopted suggestion shall not form the basis of a future claim of any nature upon the City by the suggester, heirs, or assigns.
- d. The City reserves the right to amend the program at any time and without prior notice.



Joseph A. Costantino
Director of Personnel

APPROVED:



Louis J. Fox
City Manager